

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 01653 061351Z

43 S

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 /028 W
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R 061309Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1563

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FOR ASST SEC HARTMAN, EUR, FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SCUL, BU

SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL FILM

1. ONE MONTH AGO YESTERDAY FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV OFFERED US "FIVE TO TEN MINUTES" PRIME TIME ON BULGARIAN TELEVISION TO MAKE A SPEECH OR SHOW SCENES AND VIEWS OF AMERICA, ON THE OCCASION OF OUR BICENTENNIAL. AS WE REPORTED, THIS STRUCK US AS SOMETHING OF A BREAKTHROUGH IN THIS MOST CLOSED OF THE EASTERN EUROPEAN SOCIETIES (NEXT TO ALBANIA, OF COURSE).

2. I AM SORRY TO REPORT TO YOU THAT WE HAVE STRUCK OUT IN OUR EFFORTS TO GET USIA TO PRODUCE A TEN-MINUTE FILM OF GLIMPSES OF AMERICA FOR THAT OCCASION. OUT OF SHEER TACT AND DELICACY WE DID NOT REPEAT TO THE DEPARTMENT THE EXCHANGES WE HAD WITH THE AGENCY ON THAT SUBJECT, WHICH SHOWED THE LATTER LESS AND LESS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT PRODUCING ANYTHING, AND FINALLY COMPLETELY NEGATIVE.

3. IT MAY BE TOO LATE TO GET THEM TO REVERSE THEMSELVES; BUT IN CASE YOU HAVE STOMACH FOR WHAT WOULD HAVE TO BE A CONFRONTATION ON THAT MATTER, THE REFERENCE NUMBERS OF OUR TELEGRAMS TO USIA ARE SOFIA 1383, 1400, 1411, 1498 AND 1595, THE LAST ONE A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM ME TO DIRECTOR KEOGH. THEIR INCREASINGLY NEGATIVE MESSAGES TO US CARRIED THE NUMBERS USIA 21021, 22028, 22572 AND THE FINAL NEGATIVE ONE USIA 23684.

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4. IT IS IRONICAL TO HAVE STATE 192693 CONTAINING THE SECRETARY'S CONGRATULATIONS ON THE MAJOR EFFORTS THAT WERE MADE REGARDING "HOST COUNTRY PARTICIPATION IN OUR BICENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION." IT IS TRUE THAT THE BULGARIAN OFFER OF TV TIME WAS NOT UNRELATED TO MY PERSISTENT HIGH-LEVEL INDICATIONS OF DISPLEASURE TO BULGARIANS ABOUT HOW AMERICA WAS BEING PORTRAYED IN THEIR MASS MEDIA, AND ESPECIALLY ON TV. REGRETTABLY THE OPENING THUS PRODUCED HAS NOT BEEN EXPLOITED.

5. NOTE THAT I AM NOT REALLY RECOMMENDING THAT YOU GET INTO A HASSLE WITH MR. KEOGH (WHO SEEMS TO BE ON VACATION ANYWAY, AS THE LAST NEGATIVE MESSAGE WAS SIGNED KOPP). BUT IF YOU DO, YOU WOULD HAVE TO REALLY POUR IT ON. PERSONALLY I AM ALMOST RESIGNED THAT ANYTHING WE DO HERE ON TV WILL HAVE TO BE WITHOUT USIA COOPERATION. HERZ

NOTE BY OC/T: DISTRIBUTION COORDINATED WITH S/S-O, MR. MACK.

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Message Attributes

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Concepts: BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS, CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS
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Draft Date: 06 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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ISecure: 1
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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